



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

MAY 2020

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Tuesday, May 5th
6:40 am
 Tune to station Y108 FM to hear Pastor Laura lead the radio station’s opening prayer for the day!

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A Message from Pastor Laura

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the wilderness. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water.

– Exodus 15:22-23



We are not the first to pass this way. Nor shall we be the last. Like the Israelites rejoicing as they crossed the Red Sea, it was only six weeks ago that we rejoiced at our Lenten Dinner with a Purpose. Homemade desserts lined the table. Delicious food filled our bellies. Conversation echoed off Findley Hall’s walls. This joy came without our knowing that it would be our last time together for over two months.

We learn from the Exodus that others have experienced similar sorrow. One minute, Miriam is dancing with a tambourine. The next minute the Israelites are almost dead from lack of water. Though the Israelites do not know it, their wilderness journey will continue on for four decades. Only two out of the thousands upon thousands of people who left Egypt will survive to see the Land of Promise. (For those who are interested, the two who survive are Caleb and Moses’ brother, Aaron.) Our ancestors understand what we’re feeling.

We learn from the Exodus, second, that God never leaves God’s people alone in these feelings. **God does not leave us alone in exile.** Though it may be strange to call it exile, since we are all actually quite stuck at home, this is an exile. We are exiled from our church families, church building, friends, families, playgrounds, places of joy, places of refuge, places of familiarity. God is present to us in this. As the Lord provides water for the Israelites, provides a light for them at night, provides food for them in the morning, so are we provided for by our God.

Unlike the Israelites, it would be wise that we put our trust in this God! Do not panic – do not despair – but trust!

In the coming weeks, as we continue to worship and study from home, we will do so with the story of Moses. Please join us for Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. and worship at 10:15 a.m. Let’s discover together what Moses’s story has to say for our story today.

The Lord be with you now and forever more.

In Christ’s Service,
 Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

If there's one thing I've learned during this time of "shelter at home" it's that WE NEED EACH OTHER! And even if we can't have the physical presence right now, we definitely need the "virtual" presence.

For those who know me well, you know that I still use a flip-phone – circa 2008 (?). It still works fine and does all I need it to do. It makes and answers phone calls and sends and receives the occasional text message between my kids. No matter how many times I've gotten that strange look when I pull out my flip phone, I've had no desire or need to invest in a "smart" phone.

Enter COVID 19 and about the only ability to keep in touch with people is through "virtual" contact – by webinar or smartphone (or good old-fashioned telephone). Fortunately, since I have a computer, I've been able to work and keep in touch remotely. However, during the first week of our online worship services, I realized that I had no way of recording any music that could be posted online (no smart phone – no recording ability!) That's when Ryan stepped in and joined me up at the church to do a few live recordings of music in the sanctuary, using his i-pad (aka – giant version of a smart phone). Once we were all told to "stay home," the creation of music for services shifted to spending time online creating PowerPoints and finding audio files of music for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. However, once again - I had no ability to make that music



accessible to everyone. Enter Ryan again, who did the magic of combining the audio and PowerPoint files that I sent him into a video that could be posted to the SHUP Music YouTube channel he created for our online service music. My "tech smarts" could take me only so far in today's online world, and I had to reach out for help to make it work correctly.

And speaking of tech smarts, Dave Petty, Keith Yanda and Ryan each recorded their own musical track at home and then they put it all together into a virtual trio of "Morning Has Broken" that was shared for our morning worship on April 19. Looking forward to more of their music to come!

Everyone has had to adjust their way of working through this pandemic – Laura with her online messages and devotions; Barb with her Sunday School and & youth group virtual gatherings; Karin with compiling the

bulletins and sending the congregation the links to access the services; and Karen keeping our finances in order, as people are learning how to give online.

If this crisis has taught us anything, I believe one of the most important lessons I'll take away from this time is that we need to lean on each other – to ask for help when we need it – and to offer help when we can give it. Let's hope that this lesson will continue to apply to everyone long after this crisis has passed!

You might ask, "Have I decided to get a smart phone now?" Well, the jury's still out on that decision!

SHUP Music Channel

To see all of the videos and listen to the music that Shelby and Ryan have recorded, please visit our SHUP Music Channel. Just go to YouTube and search "SHUP Music."

<https://www.youtube.com/user/darknigh19>

Update from Session

Session sends its greetings. We hope this message finds SHUP members and friends healthy and safe. As Pastor Laura announced in her virtual service posted on April 26th, Session decided at its April 22nd meeting that the SHUP building will remain closed throughout May.

We are all anxious to join together in worship again in person. But given how much we have yet to learn about this disease, Session is taking a slow, careful approach to reopening our building. Although Governor Wolf's current stay-at-home order expires May 8th, we don't know yet when we will be cleared to resume live worship services.

The governor has said some parts of the state may be released from the

order before others. It's also possible activities will be phased in gradually, with large public gatherings most likely be one of the last on the list. It also seems highly likely health officials will recommend social distancing even after large gatherings resume.

Session is currently forming a Re-Entry Team that will create a plan for cleaning and sanitizing the church before the building re-opens. The team will also create a plan for adapting our worship as needed to help keep us all healthy. Over the past few years, it's been our habit to change things up a bit for summer worship, and this year will be no exception. The team will be using guidance from both the presbytery and from local public health officials in creating our plan.

We hope to see all of you soon. In the meantime, please join us as we continue our online worship. Pastor Laura's service is posted on YouTube each Sunday, with special music and readings. You are also invited to join her live on Zoom for Sunday school. For a complete schedule of online events, please see SHUP's Friday email. If you are in need of pastoral care or other support while the building is closed, please contact the church office.

We thank you for your steadfast devotion to this church. We are grateful for your ongoing support and for your willingness to adopt new technology like our online giving site, [get.Tithe.ly](https://www.gettithely.com). Our givers are truly a blessing.

Children's Footprints...

By Barb Clark

As I sit in my office at home, one thing is consistent: the changing of dates. It feels like the wind is inside today as I write this. Outside, it is blowing all things to new areas of the yard. The porch chair is now up against the shrubbery, the wind chimes do not even sound like the beautiful Corinthian bells that they are, they are just clanging and clanging, and frankly, getting on my nerves. Our large Weeping Cherry Tree has spat its petals and covered my newly washed car.

I am not sleeping well. I have tried chamomile tea, deep breathing and no screen time an hour prior to going to bed. I have even tried reading to no avail. Between the train running through my head and the dog snoring, it might be 3:00 am before I finally slumber.

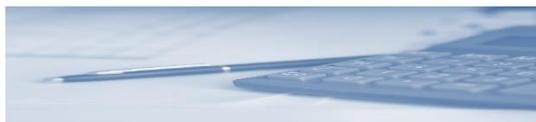
I try not to watch any television if I can help it and check on the news only every few days.

No matter how nice the person who is building my order for the groceries is, it is not the same as meandering through the aisles aimlessly thinking about what my tummy would like for the week. I miss the connection of people. I am that person (as my children roll their eyes) who talks to every stranger, just the connection of a human standing before me is satisfying.

Life is hard right now.

BUT you know what I have found in all of this? Jesus! Jesus is here with us!!! He is giving us the nudge to help those that need it. Look around you: when have you seen this much kindness all at once? I think this Covid-19 time is teaching us patience, and that WE

do not have control in this thing called life. We are a part of our Creator, who is the story writer of our life, if we let Him be. I have always listened, and most times do as I feel I am supposed to, but there are times where I buck back and say, "Whoa..... not today, Lord, not today". But, in these times, the choices are just His. I take comfort in that. The stress and anxiety, while still VERY present, has let me see with clarity that I am not in control. I do not know the outcome. I am only led by my Savior beside the still waters, and into the green pastures, and I take much comfort in that. So, yes, He is present in this time of uncertainty and He will use it for His GLORY - you can mark my words on that! I am thankful for a God who loves us and is present with us during this time.



Financial Statement Update as of 03/31/20

INCOME:

Pledges, loose offering
 Designated mission giving
 Flowers
 Per capita
 Interest / Nursery school / misc.
 Transfer - Endowments

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	Variance Fav. (Unfav.)
Pledges, loose offering	46,277	46,026	(251)
Designated mission giving	269	108	(161)
Flowers	514	485	(29)
Per capita	1,349	1,496	147
Interest / Nursery school / misc.	126	202	76
Transfer - Endowments	31,002	34,711	3,709
Total income	79,537	83,028	3,491

EXPENSE:

Adm. & personnel
 Christian Education
 Communications
 Cong. Care & Community Outreach
 Facilities
 Mission *
 Stewardship
 Worship & music

Adm. & personnel	(53,378)	(51,040)	2,338
Christian Education	(1,629)	(2,997)	(1,368)
Communications	(112)	(834)	(722)
Cong. Care & Community Outreach	(175)	(20)	155
Facilities	(16,130)	(15,966)	164
Mission *	(2,583)	(2,409)	174
Stewardship	(3,537)	(2,850)	687
Worship & music	(1,266)	(1,200)	66
Total expense	(78,810)	(77,316)	1,494

Surplus (deficit)

	727	5,712	4,985
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* - includes 5% mission accrual.

An Update on Online Giving

From the Finance Office

It's been a little over a month since we began accepting donations online and the response has been very good. As of April 16, we have had 34 donations by 21 different donors amounting to more than \$4,700.00. We cannot thank you enough for your generosity! Even though we are not physically together, we are still connected by our love of SHUP and the work that we do. And your continued support makes it possible.

If online giving is something you may be interested in, it is easy to do from your computer or smartphone:

- From your computer, go to get.tithe.ly and set up a personal account. Then you can search for Sunset Hills U.P. Church to direct your giving to SHUP.
- From your smart phone, you can download the green Tithe.ly app. Again, set up your personal account, and search for Sunset Hills U.P. Church.
- Select the account that you would like to donate to:
 - General Fund (either this or Regular Offering can be used for regular giving)
 - Regular Offering
 - Youth
 - Mission
 - Special Donation
 - Memorial

If you would like to be more specific - you can leave a note in the Memo line. Once your donation is made, a receipt will be emailed to you. Your donation will also be recorded in our church software, so these donations will be included in your regular Statement of Giving. If you have chosen to cover credit card fees, this will be on your Statement as well.

For more information, please contact Karen Comstock Monday and Thursday in the office, or by email at shupfinance@gmail.com.

Whether you choose to give online, or more traditionally, we are grateful for all you do.

We pray you are well and look forward with joy to the day we can all worship together again.

May Activities

All of our May activities will continue to be online using Zoom, YouTube or Facebook. Links for the YouTube and Facebook activities can be found on our website shupchurch.org. If you are interested in joining a Zoom event, please contact the person listed with that activity (e-mail addresses are listed on page 1 of the Messenger) and a link will be e-mailed to you. The information will also continue to be included in the weekly e-mails that are sent every Friday.

Adult Sunday School

9:00 am

Pastor Laura began a new study of “Moses” by Adam Hamilton on April 26th. Pastor Laura will be teaching this class using Zoom.

Sunday Worship Service

10:15 am

Pastor Laura will continue to post the weekly service to our YouTube Channel.

Sunday Worship Music

Shelby Gracey will continue to post videos to our SHUP Music YouTube channel.

Children’s Sunday School

11:00 am

All children K-5th grade are invited to join Barb Clark for this Zoom class to learn about the love of Jesus.

Youth Group Live

Sundays - 2:00 pm

Barb Clark will lead this class using the Zoom app. All youth are invited and encouraged to participate.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Mondays - 1:00 pm

The Findley Hall Bible Study will now be held online using Zoom. The new study began on April 20th. The class is covering a 6-week study of Andy Stanley’s “In the Meantime.” His words offer encouragement through seemingly impossible situations, reminding us to hold strong to our faith as others have done through the centuries.

Before class begins, you are asked to watch the video segment online and then be ready for discussion.

If you would like to join this class and need access to the videos, please contact Evelyn Lape at (412)531-9856.

Adult Bible Study

Wednesdays - 7:00 pm

Barb Clark will lead this class using Zoom.

Produce to People

Saturday, May 16th

Please contact Barb Clark to get more information and to sign-up for this event. This is subject to change due to the COVID-19 emergency.

Christian Education News

Graduates 2020

Are you graduating this year from High School, College or Trade School? If so, we want to know. Please send your name, school and any future plans to Barb Clark. We want to joyfully celebrate you and all of your accomplishments.

Senior Mission Trip

The Senior High Mission trip by Youthworks has been canceled. We will now be focusing on a mission week based in Pittsburgh. More details to follow.

Mehaffey Scholarship

New Deadline is now May 15th

If you are planning to apply for the Mehaffey Scholarship, please contact Barb Clark for qualifying information and the online forms that you will need.

Vacation Bible School

New Dates August 17th - 21st

Vacation Bible School will now be held in August. There will be more information in next month’s newsletter for those who would like to enroll their child(ren) or volunteer for the week.

Rummage Sale

Saturday, August 15th

The rummage sale will be held later in the summer. More details will be provided next month.

Confirmation Class

Wednesdays - 11:00 am

Starting May 6th through June 3rd Pastor Laura will resume classes using Zoom. *As a reminder, all confirmands are expected to attend Sunday Worship and Youth Group Live!*

Prayer Request

If you would like to make a prayer request, you can do so any anytime by contacting Pastor Laura directly. Pastor Laura will then be able to pray with you, add your request to the weekly bulletin and/or pass it on to our prayer chain.

Prayer Chain

We currently have a prayer chain that includes members of Sunset Hills. They are informed of the prayer request by Pastor Laura and it is passed on via the telephone to the other members on the list.

SHUP would like to create an electronic chain that would afford more members and friends the opportunity to pray when a request is made. **If you would like to be a part of the electronic prayer chain, please contact the church office directly at sunsethillschurch@gmail.com to be added to our list.**

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*
- Ephesians 6:18



Prayer List

- Carolyn Caldwell
- JoAnne Enterline
- Walter Jackson
- Phyllis and Dick Moore
- Patti Patterson
- Bill Newman



May Birthdays & Holidays

- 1 Jason D'Amico
- 5 Jenn Kennedy, Rosalie Pillitteri
- 6 David Greenfield
- 8 Christopher Tang
- 10 Nathan Enterline
- 10 **Happy Mother's Day**
- 12 Kara Stuart, Lindsey Wingold
- 13 Karen Comstock, Ian Ney
- 14 Heather D'Amico
- 15 Michael Comstock
- 16 Kelly Dawson
- 17 Kait Holloway
- 18 Riley Farabaugh
- 19 Kylie Bryer
- 24 Dian Duffner, David Heim
- 25 Janeen Hughey
- 25 **HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY**
- 27 Drew Kennedy, Phyllis Moore
- 28 Robert Pritchard
- 30 Bob Shetler



New Address

Dick and Phyllis Moore have moved to Paramount in Bethel Park. Because no one can be in facility except essential workers and residents, they are not allowed visitors and they cannot get a phone line installed just yet! If you would like to reach out through good old-fashioned snail mail their new address is:

*5785 Baptist Road
Room #233
Bethel Park, PA 15102*

Send an e-Greeting to Dorothy Wolfe

If you would like to send a message to Dorothy, please go to Google and search for Elderwood Assisted Living, West Seneca, NY (be sure to find the right location, there are several Elderwood facilities around the country). Once you find the right one, go to their website and scroll down to the bottom of the page, click on "Contact" and then "Send a Greeting." Just follow the instructions to send the greeting. They will print the messages and give them to Dorothy.



“We love, because He first loved us.”

(1 John 4:19)

That is the heading Sarajane & Luke have chosen for their wedding invitation.

As members and friends of Sunset Hills United Presbyterian church, you are our extended family, and we cannot imagine celebrating the union of Luke & Sarajane without your presence!

You are all invited to attend the wedding ceremony of Sarajane Gracey and Luke Obarsky on:

Sunday, June 14, 2020

2:30 p.m.

at

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

A brief reception of cake & punch will be held downstairs in Findley Hall immediately following the ceremony.

Because we love you all, we sincerely hope you will be able to join us on this very special day!

Bill & Shelby Gracey

Due to the COVID 19 outbreak, a back-up date of Sunday, August 2, 2020 has been established. The decision will be made later in May if the ceremony will have to be postponed, depending on the state mandates.

Thank you

Dear SHUP family,

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for the outpouring of love you have showered on our family. Words cannot express how much your cards and phone calls have meant this past month. While we are all social distancing, you have found ways to let us know we are not alone, and for that we are grateful. Hugs to you all, until we can be together again.

The Comstock-Holloway Family

On Tuesday, April 28th, members of the SHUP Mission Team delivered lunch to the staff of the Cardiac ICU at Children’s Hospital to thank them for their work.



Thank you for thinking of all of us during this trying time. We appreciate your generosity!

Cardiac ICU